

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAPE T 00126 271549Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6652
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0126

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: CHURCHMEN AND INTERNAL SWAPO VIEWS

1. KURT DAHLMANN, EDITOR OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG IN WINDHOEK, IN A CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFFS JANUARY 26, URGED THE WESTERN GOVERNMENTS TO PUBLISH THE CONTACT GROUP'S PROPOSAL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. DAHLMANN SAID THAT ONCE THE PROPOSAL WAS PUBLISHED, WE COULD HOPE FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT FROM PROMINENT CHURCH LEADERS IN NAMIBIA. THE ATTITUDE OF THESE CHURCHMEN, SUCH AS BISHOPS DE VRIES AND AUALA OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH, DAHLMANN SAID, WOULD IN TURN HAVE CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE ON SWAPO. DAHLMANN ALSO THOUGHT THAT SOME OF THE INTERNAL SWAPO LEADERS, SUCH AS DANIEL TJONGARERO, WERE INCLINED TO FAVOR
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PAGE 02 CAPE T 00126 271549Z

THE WESTERN INITIATIVE. DAHLMANN REPORTED THAT IN A RECENT CONVERSATION, TJONGARERO HAD TOLD HIM THAT NUJOMA FAVORED ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL BUT WAS STYMIED BY A RADICAL GROUP IN THE SWAPO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, LED BY VICE PRESIDENT MUYONGO. DAHLMANN SAID DE VRIES AND SOME SWAPO INTERNAL LEADERS WERE WORKING ON AN INITIATIVE "TO BRING PEACE TO THE AREA."

2. DAHLMANN WAS IN CAPE TOWN TO ADDRESS A MEETING OF THE S.A. INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. DURING HIS SPEECH, DAHLMANN REFERRED TO THE POSSIBILITY OF A UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE IN SWA BY THE NATIONAL PARTY BACKED BY ELEMENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES, THE POLICE AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. DAHLMANN TOLD US THERE WAS INCREASING BACKLASH AMONG THE WHITE POPULATION AGAINST THE MOVEMENT TOWARD BLACK RULE. THE IMBROGLIO OVER THE CHANGING OF THE DATES OF THE NEW YORK MEETING, HE SAID, HAD INCREASED SUSPICION OF WESTERN INTENTIONS AMONG THE WHITES.

3. COMMENT: DAHLMANN IS A WELL CONNECTED OBSERVER WHO HAS GOOD CONTACTS WITH BOTH SWAPO AND THE CHURCHES. ALTHOUGH OCCASSIONALLY GIVEN TO EXAGGERATION, HE HAS PROVIDED US RELIABLE INFORMATION MANY TIMES IN THE PAST.

4. THE CHURCHMEN HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN WORKING ON A NEW INITIATIVE OF THEIR OWN. DE VRIES RECENTLY ASKED A VISITING FRG EMBASSY OFFICER IF HE COULD BE PROVIDED A COPY OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THEY ARE QUITE INTERESTED IN THE WESTERN PROPOSAL AND MIGHT VERY WELL ENDORSE IT OR TRY TO USE IT AS A BASIS FOR THEIR OWN INITIATIVE.

5. IF THE CHURCHMEN TO WHOM TJONGARERO HAS CLOSE TIES
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PAGE 03 CAPE T 00126 271549Z

SHOULD ENDORSE THE CONTACT GROUP PROPOSAL, IT IS CONCEIVABLE TJONGARERO AND OTHER INTERNAL SWAPO LEADERS WOULD SUPPORT THEM EVEN IF THAT BROUGHT THEM INTO CONFLICT WITH EXTERNAL SWAPO. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF RECENT INDICATIONS OF THE UNCERTAINTY OF TJONGARERO'S POSITION IN SWAPO. MOREOVER, HE HAS TOLD US PRIVATELY HE COULD ACCEPT THE KEY ELEMENT OF A LIMITED AND CONFINED PRESENCE OF SAG TROOPS IN NAMIBIA DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD (PRETORIA 5700).
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